appeared regularly in the previous six years.—H. Symes, 52 Lowther Road, Bournemouth. 3.iii.1967.

A Curious Conduct of Alsophila aescularia Schiff.—On 23rd February I noticed a male *aescularia* on a paling that I pass every day. The next day it was in the same position, so I marked the particular paling with my knife. The moth continued in the same place until 4th March, on two occasions it shifted to a different angle and on one it moved up four inches, but otherwise it was apparently quiescent for 10 days. I raised its upper wings gently and it was not crippled; the weather throughout the time, though several times rather windy, was warm.—H. C. Huggins, 65 Eastwood Boulevard, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Vanessa cardui L. in Cornwall.—Some reports of the early appearances of *Vanessa cardui* L. in Cornwall this year may well be due to hibernation, and therefore worth recording.

Two or three were seen at Pendower, S. Cornwall, on 26th February by Mr. R. Penhallurick, and another the same day at Portscatho nearby. On 5th March a faded specimen was seen by Dr. Allsop at Allet near Truro, and on 13th March Mrs. M. Sheldon saw a very battered one at Padstow on the north coast.

It has been a mild winter in Cornwall with only occasional, unsustained frosty spells.—Dr. F. H. N. Smith, Turnstones, Perrancoombe, Perranporth, Cornwall. 22.iii.1967.

Late Migrants 1966.—A sudden burst of migrant activity was observed at Steeple Barton, Oxfordshire, in October 1966. The following were taken in my mercury vapour trap:—

20th October—A female *Heliothis armigera* Hübn. in perfect condition. This was one of the darkest specimens I have ever seen. It is possible, therefore, that, if it behaves in a similar way to *Heliothis peltigera* Schiff., it may have bred in the cooler temperatures of Britain.

21st October—One male *Acherontia atropos* L. and a large number of very pale *Agrotis ipsilon* Hufn. and *Peridroma porphyreá* Schiff.

22nd October—One *Nemophila noctuella* L., followed by two more the next night.—H. B. D. Kettlewell, Genetics Laboratory, Department of Zoology, Parks Road, Oxford. 28.ii.67.

Lithophane leautieri Bdv. in Somerset.—At Shipham, Mendip, on 14th October 1966, I found a *Lithophane leautieri* Boisduval (Blair's pinion) outside my mercury vapour light trap. This species was first recorded in the county at Minehead in 1963 (*Proc. Somerset Arch and Natural History Society*, **108**: 181), but this appears to be the first occurrence in north Somerset. The identification has been confirmed at the British Museum (Natural History).—Trevor Silcocks, Bryher, Kenmeade Close, Shipham, Somerset. 23.ii.1967.

Obituary

ROBIN MARCUS MERE

With the death of Robin Mere on 17th January after an illness lasting many months British entomologists have lost a lovable personality and a most generous friend.

Born in London on 21st February, 1909, he was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford. Although he had started collecting Lepidoptera at an early age by the time he left Oxford motor cars were his great interest and with characteristic enthusiasm this led to racing M.G.'s. Having qualified as a solicitor and married, motor-racing was dropped, but before his earlier hobby again took hold of him the war intervened. As a Lieutenant R.N.V.R. reaching the exceptional rank of Commander his war service took him to many waters from Norway to the tropics.

Making a fresh start after the war Robin Mere was soon taking part in the exciting wave of discovery of new British Lepidoptera made possible by the use of mercury-vapour light and in a short time built up a remarkably extensive collection to which regular trapping in his fine garden at Chiddingfold contributed a great deal. As soon as small portable generators came into use he started to use them to explore remote and inaccessible places and so began a series of great expeditions, the first to the top of Skiddaw in 1954 in a vain search for *Amathes alpicola*. The writer was lucky enough to join his assault on Braeriach in 1955 and the following May to accompany him on a tour of the North of Scotland in atrocious weather, with little entomological reward but no loss of enthusiasm. Then followed several expeditions to the Scilly Isles on which huge quantities of apparatus were taken; four mercury-vapour traps were run regularly on Tresco as well as portables and it was usual for all traps to be examined before the sun reached them, often needing a 5 a.m. start. The Burren of Clare was later tackled in similar energetic fashion. This was perhaps his favourite collecting ground, wild, exciting and owing to his inexhaustible energy always turning up something new. Most of the discoveries in the Burren were micros, in which he had been taking an increasing interest though he was never persuaded to set the smallest of them: but he was ever as keen in pursuit of the Coleophorids and Nepticulids which he would not keep for his own collection as in hunting the larger species. Such generosity was characteristic of him and there can be no one who collected with him and did not experience it. Many other high-powered expeditions there were—it is remarkable how they were fitted into the life of a busy and very successful solicitor. In 1960 he became one of the team of naturalists appointed to survey the gardens of Buckingham Palace: here was an unexplored locality which filled him with enthusiasm and it was not surprising that the list of Lepidoptera he helped to compile should be one of the most important results of the survey, though quite extraordinary that it should contain two species, *Earias biplaga* Walker and *Monochroa hornigi* (Staudinger), new to the British Isles. Other species captured by him for the first time in the British Isles included *Eupithecia egenaria* H.-S., *Hymenia recurvalis* (F.), *Perinephela perlucidalis* (Hübn), *Nephopteryx albicilla* (H.-S.), *Pterophorus icterodactylus* Mann and *Nothris congressariella* Bruand, and among his discoveries must also be mentioned his Irish subspecies *hibernica* of *Eupithecia intricata* Zett. and the finding of *Cocymbia puppillaria* (Hübn.) and *Crocidosema plebejana* (Zell.) as residents in the Scilly Isles. His publications are mostly to be found in the Entomologist's Gazette and reflect his infectious enthusiasm and good humour.

A member of the South London Entomological and Natural History Society from 1946, Robin Mere held the office of President in 1960 and from 1959 was a Trustee of the Society. From 1962 he was on the council of the Royal Entomological Society and for several years was a member of the Entomological Club. The bare facts of office-holding do not give an adequate account of his services so freely rendered to all who needed them. His generous support of a number of projects and help to many individuals will probably never be recorded: he was a friend to all and never had a hard word to say of anyone. Yet was combined a certain ruthlessness and contempt for inessentials: bureaucracy could provoke him to mishchief, as when he considered the request for "Occupation" on a certain form to be irrelevant and answered on one occasion "Spy" and on another "Professional poacher"—needless to say without adverse developments!

In one who was so keenly appreciative of the beauties of the natural world it was a shock to find colour-blindness. Yet to Robin Mere the bright tawny coloured larvae of *Malacosoma castrensis* harmonised perfectly with the rich green vegetation of the Thames saltings and the delicate green larvae of *Agrotis ripae* were the same colour as sand. His keen eyesight usually overcame this defect and coupled with his quick reactions gave him great skill in netting even the smallest species. The same attributes of course contributed to his driving skill: as his passenger a journey could be very fast and uncomfortable but was entirely safe. He lived at high speed. Letters were often dashed off at a great rate and signed 'Haste, R.', but their volume was enormous and their contents seldom other than well-stated fact or plans for the future.

The loss of such a man until recently so active and energetic is hard to bear and it is tragic that his plans for retirement from professional life and expansion of entomological activity were never fulfilled. His widow and son have the deepest sympathy of a great number of friends.

E. C. P.-C.

Current Literature

De Danske Malore (second edition) by Skat Hoffmeyer. 561 pp. + 25 coloured plates + 1 black and white. Aarhus University Press, 1966.

This book, in the Danish language, deals with the Geometridae of that country, and gives one the impression of being a combination of South and Tutt in its style. This remark does not imply any suggestion of plagiarism, but is intended to indicate that it combines the Scientific but popular approach of South with its excellent coloured plates, and the practical hints on collecting and breeding certain species which suggests the writings of Tutt.

Each Danish species is described under its scientific name with the useful addition of a reference to the coloured plates showing the imago and larva.

The descriptions of many species are embellished with half-tone illustrations of interesting varieties, in the text, and where necessary for the distinction of species, comparative drawings of genitalia or wing pattern details are added. The "pugs" are specially well treated in this way with 58 drawings of male and female genitalia details. They are also given